

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 260609Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 105

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 2488

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, NZ, SN

SUBJ: NZ FORCE IN SINGAPORE TO RETURN HOME

REF: WELLINGTON 2401 DTG 191639Z AUG 75 (NOTAL)

1. ON AUGUST 26 PM ROWLING ANNOUNCED THAT FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF NEW ZEALAND'S PARTNERS IN FPDA, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED THAT NZ FORCE IN SINGAPORE SHOULD RETURN HOME "IN NEXT TWO YEARS OR SO." DECISION WOULD NOT AFFECT NEW ZEALAND'S MEMBERSHIP IN FPDA, INCLUDING PARTICIPATION IN INTEGRATED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM.

2. PM SAID NZ FORCES HAVE MADE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE AND HAD ASSISTED THEM IN ADJUSTING TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES DURING CRITICAL EARLY YEARS
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OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE. MORE RECENTLY NZ FORCES HAD

HELPED MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE BUILD UP THEIR OWN DEFENSE CAPABILITIES. IN TURN NZ FORCES HAD BENEFITED FROM WORKING WITH FORCES OF OTHER FPDA COUNTRIES.

3. PM OBSERVED "RECENT CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR PARTNERS HAVE INDICATED THAT TTHAT FORM OF SUPPORT WILL NOT BE NEEDED MUCH LONGER," AND "THERE ARE OTHER WAYS MORE RELEVANT TO THEIR NEEDS IN WHICH WE CAN NOW HELP. THEY ARE QUITE AGREEABLE THEREFORE TO OUR PLANNING FOR THE RETURN HOME OF OUR FORCES." TIMING OF THE MOVE WOULD DEPEND ON NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING RATE AT WHICH ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO ACCOMMODATE FORCE IN NZ.

4. PM NOTED FORCE COMPRISES ABOUT 1,000 SERVICEMEN AND CIVILIANS, WITH 1,500 DEPENDENTS. MAJOR OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS ARE AN INFANTRY BATTALION AND AIR FORCE TRANSPORT SQUADRON. IN ADDITION, FOR PART OF EACH YEAR A RNZN FRIGATE IS ON STATION IN SIGAPORE. BALANCE OF FORCE IS MADE UP OF SUPPORTING LOGISTIC FACILITIES. PM SAID BATTALION ON ITS RETURN WOULD BE RETAINED AS AN ENTITIY AS THE MAJOR OPERATIONAL UNIT OF THE ARMY AND LOCATED AT LINTON CAMP WHERE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE CONSTRUCTED. AIRCRAFT PERSONNEL WOULD BE ABSORBED BY NEW ZEALAND-BASED SQUADRONS AND SUPPORTING UNITS WOULD BE DISBANDED AND THEIR PERSONNEL ABSORBED BY EXISTING UNITS.

5. PM NOTED IT HAD NEVER BEEN INTENDED THAT FORCE SHOULD STAY IN SIGAPORE INDEFINITELY. ITS RETURN HOME WOULD NOT REFLECT LESSENING OF NZ'S INTEREST IN WELL BEING OF REGION AND ITS STABILITY. "DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE REGION WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM." HE ADDED THAT NZ AIRCRAFT WOULD STILL BE DEPLOYED PERIODICALLY TO SEA AND NZ SHIPS WOULD SPEND PART OF EACH YEAR THERE. ARMY UNITS WOULD BE SENT TO COUNTRIES IN REGION TO TAKE PART IN JOINT TRAINING EXERCISES AND PROVIDE PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE. UNDER DEFENCE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME, NZ WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TRAINING IN NZ FOR ELEMENTS OF THEIR ARMED SERVICES.

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